

being drawn to a non-elected species, claims 1-3, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Asano et al.*, and claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kagawa* in view of *Asano et al.*.

Claim 2 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 3, and 10-12 have been amended. More particularly, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite that the printer is a stencil printer which includes a rotating roller and a removing roller which is in contact with the periphery of the rotating roller and which rotates so as to both spread and reduce ink transferred to the rotating roller so that the ink on the periphery of the rotating roller can be dried quickly.

As a quick synopsis of the applied prior art references, Applicants hereby repeat the abstracts of *Asano et al.* and *Kagawa*, as follows:

Asano et al. discloses a recording system including a recording head for performing recording on a sheet, a first rotary member disposed at a downstream side of the recording head and contacting an unrecorded surface of the sheet on which the recording is performed by the recording head and adapted to apply a feeding force to the sheet, and a second rotary member being provided at its peripheral surface with a plurality of teeth and contacting a recorded surface of the sheet with the tips of the teeth thereof, and cooperating with the first rotary member to feed the sheet. The plural teeth of the second rotary member are staggered with other teeth in a direction transverse to a sheet feeding direction. A member is provided to clean the first and second rotary members.

Kagawa discloses that in a stencil printer, when a print drum reaches a stand-by position where a new master produced by a master making operation should have its leading edge clamped on the drum, a master discharging operation under way for discharging a used master is interrupted. After the leading edge of the new master has been clamped on the print

drum, the master discharging operation is resumed while a master feeding operation for wrapping the new master around the print drum is under way. A printing operation for printing a document image on a sheet is effected simultaneously with the resumption of the master discharging operation. Such a procedure is implemented as a high speed 1 control mode and executed by a main control unit.

Neither *Asano et al.* nor *Kagawa* teach or suggest, as is now recited in amended independent claim 1, that the printer is a stencil printer which includes a rotating roller and a removing roller which is in contact with the periphery of the rotating roller and which rotates so as to both spread and reduce ink transferred to the rotating roller so that the ink on the periphery of the rotating roller can be dried quickly.

More particularly, Applicants respectfully submit that while *Asano et al.* does disclose an ink jet printer which includes a printing unit (101), a guide path or a paper-feeding path, a rotating member (spurs 40A and 40B) which is disposed in the paper path and which contributes to the carrying of the sheet of paper, and a removing roller (41) which is in contact with the periphery of the rotating member and removes the ink from the rotating member, it is apparent that the removing roller of *Asano et al.* is capable of removing the ink from the rotating member, but cannot spread the ink on the rotating member (spurs 40A and 40B).

On page 3, lines 9-11, the Office Action alleges that “. . . it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that when the removing roller (41) contacts the periphery of the rotating member, it will likely spread ink transferred to the rotating member. However, it is not correct because the rotating member of *Asano et al.* is the spurs 40A and 40B and the ink cannot be spread onto the periphery of the spurs 40A and 40B.

Note that the removing roller of the present invention rotates so as to both spread the ink transferred to the rotating roller and to reduce the ink transferred to the rotating roller. This is a significant feature of the present invention which is not disclosed, taught, or even suggested by *Asano et al.*, either alone or in combination with *Kagawa*. In the present invention, the ink on the periphery of the rotating roller is thinly spread and the area of the ink in contact with air increases, so that the ink is dried quicker. This function of the present invention is also not disclosed, taught, or suggested by *Asano et al.*, either alone or in combination with *Kagawa*.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 1, 3, and 10-12 do not add new matter. Applicants also respectfully submit that claims 3-20 are either directly or indirectly dependent upon amended independent claim 1 so that arguments serving to patentably distinguish amended independent claim 1 from the prior art of record are available, among others, to patentably distinguish amended claims 3-20. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a), and allowance of amended claims 1, 3, and 10-12 and reconsideration of claims 4-9 and 13-20.

In view of the present amendment, amended claims 1, 3, and 10-12 and claims 4-9 and 13-20 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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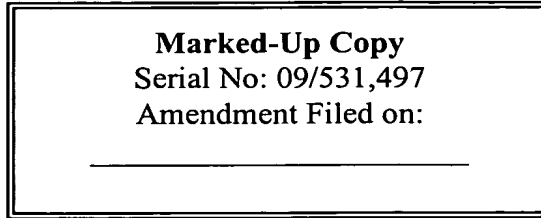
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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 2, without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claims 1-3 and 10-12, as follows:

1. (Amended) A stencil printer comprising:

a printing unit for printing an image on a sheet of paper;

a guide path for guiding the sheet of paper along a path of which the printing unit is disposed;

a rotating [member] roller disposed in the guide path and contributes to carry the sheet of paper; and

a removing [member] roller which is in contact with the periphery of the rotating [member] roller and which rotates so as to both spread and reduce ink transferred to the rotating [member] roller so that [the removing member removes a part of the ink from the rotating member] the ink on the periphery of the rotating roller can be dried quickly.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Amended) [A] The stencil printer according to claim [2] 1, wherein the removing roller rotates in accordance with the rotation of the rotating [member rotates] roller.

10. (Amended) [A] The stencil printer according to claim 1, wherein the rotating [member] roller is a pair of resist rollers.

11. (Amended) [A] The stencil printer according to claim 10, wherein the resist rollers are rotated not only at the time of conveying a printed sheet.

12. (Amended) [A] The stencil printer according to claim 10, wherein [the printer is a stencil printer having a master making mechanism, and] the pair of resist rollers is rotated at the time of making a master by [the] a master making mechanism.